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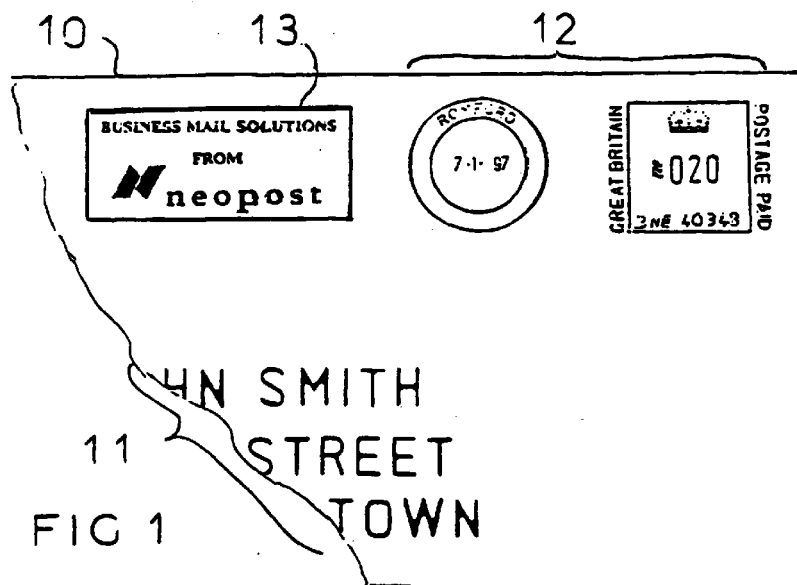
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(54) **Method and apparatus for printing and prevention of copying of postage indicia**

(57) Postage indicia (12) are printed on mail items (10) using an ink having a characteristic such that the ink is rendered invisible when subjected to light or light and heat of sufficient intensity. When an attempt is made to copy the imprint of a postage indicia (12) on a mail item for which proper accounting has been effected the imprint is subjected to a burst of light or light and

heat and the ink becomes invisible and prevents copying of the imprint. The imprint of the postage indicium may overly and obscure a void mark (14) which becomes visible and is copied in the event of attempting to copy the original authentic postage indicium (12).



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# EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number  
EP 98 30 0603

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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search <b>THE HAGUE</b>		Date of completion of the search <b>26 July 1999</b>	Examiner <b>Meulemans, J-P</b>
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	

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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT  
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